CHAPTER IV. PRESENTATION OF CASES

Introduction

The research study endeavored to develop an in-depth understanding of how women behave in the role of a high school principal. Through a participant, observation, research format, three female principals were observed for a period of approximately three weeks each.

The three women who participated in the research were chosen for their interest in the topic of feminine leadership and their interest in the under-representation of women in school administration. All three women are experienced principals; two have held the position of junior high school principal.

Three case studies present each of the female principals and their unique administrative style. Each case study is composed of a case narrative and case report. These formats are a logical way to present rich style descriptions as well as maximize reader understanding. Descriptions chronicling behavior in this manner are an inviting and interesting venue through which to convey information. This format allows the reader to compare and contrast cases while also providing a framework for self-reflection.

Employing a descriptive report format that uses grounded theory methodology is a testament to the blending of the masculine and feminine principles which guided this inquiry. Behavioral processes presented in a thematic manner bring together the masculine principle of systematic data gathering and analysis with the feminine principle that informs storytelling.

Case Narratives

Case narratives, located in Appendix C, summarize the data collected in the field during the site visits. In addition to descriptions, they reflect interpretations and judgments about the analysis of interview, observation, and document data. Comparisons of the constructs and descriptors are located in the meta-matrix found in Appendix D.

Conceptual Construction

An in-depth analysis of observation and interview data from each case provided the direction for analytic questioning and comparing of the data. Known in the field of research as the “constant comparative method of analysis”, it is the heart of the grounded theory method.

Open coding (i.e., breaking down, examining, comparing, conceptualizing, and categorizing data) yielded a large set of discrete descriptive behaviors (e.g., talking to teacher) associated with each case. These descriptive behaviors were categorized into conceptual categories and distinguished from one another by conceptual labels (e.g., conferring).

Because of the vast array of concepts, which emerged during open coding, grouping was required. Using questions and episodic comparison...
descriptions (writing to compare what is going on), concepts came together into groups called categories.

An analysis of attributes (qualities) and conditions associated with the categories yielded the identification of broader-based phenomenon, which created associative relationships among the categories. Higher levels of abstraction altered associations, subordinating some while elevating others.

Detailed descriptions of the categories, referred to as processes, are located in the three case narratives. These processes carry labels unique to each case in an attempt to clearly describe and delineate the process. For explanatory purposes, these processes are hierarchically associated through levels of abstraction as well as conceptual labeling.

The three narratives distinguish themselves from one another by a unique, conceptual descriptor that encapsulates the meaning inherent in its subordinated categories. In addition, fictional names assigned to the principals, as well as all school personnel, facilitate understanding and protect identities.

Presentation Format

The narrative is composed of four sections: the introduction, the first primary process, the second primary process, and the conclusion. The introduction provides personal and professional information about each principal as well as a summary of her administrative style. The two process sections describe the two primary behavioral processes by category (e.g., piloting people, promoting programs). Style descriptors assist in readily distinguishing the principals. See Figure 1: Case Titles

Table 4.1 Case Titles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case</th>
<th>Principal Name</th>
<th>Administrative Title</th>
<th>School Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Dr. Patricia Parks</td>
<td>Professional Principal</td>
<td>Hillside High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Dr. Gayle Grant</td>
<td>Guardian Principal</td>
<td>Ethan Allen High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Connie Conrad</td>
<td>Constructive Principal</td>
<td>Greenland High</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Selected examples of data from the field are referenced throughout the narratives. Selected documents from the original data, transcribed into Ethnograph, appear in Appendix H.

Case Reports

Using the explanatory process descriptions contained in the narratives, case reports introduce each case, summarize the categories explained in the narrative, and identify a central core category called the administrative strategy.
Table 4.2 Administrative Strategies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case 1</th>
<th>Professional Principal</th>
<th>Principled Marketing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Case 2</td>
<td>Guardian Principal</td>
<td>Steadfast Shepherding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case 3</td>
<td>Constructive Principal</td>
<td>Preeminent Proffering</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

During analysis, new categories and relationships were identified. They expand and enrich the administrative style description and invite additional abstraction.

Conceptual Construction

Using axial coding procedures, new categories, as well as new connections between categories, emerged. Open coding fractured the data while axial coding associated together again in a different way.

Basic analytic procedures involved answering questions that compare and contrast data as well as composing episodic comparison descriptions. Episodic comparison descriptions are rich descriptions that attend to the question, “What is going on here?” The descriptions are expanded through responses to the questions beginning with who, when, what, where, and why.

The use of a paradigm logic model ordered and related the categories elevating one category while subordinating the rest of the categories. The elevated category is the central core category and is referred to in the case report as an administrative strategy. (Appendix F)

Presentation Format

Because the administrative style of each principal is unique, data from the three cases present independently in three different reports.

Each case report consists of five sections: the introduction, a description of the principal, a description of the administrative context, the administrative strategy, and a conclusion.

The categories, highlighted in blue, are presented through the framework of story. The action in the story is about how each principal manages school operations in order to influence the people to support the programs in order to accomplish the school mission.

Selected examples of data from the field are referenced throughout the case reports and highlighted. The original data, transcribed into Ethnograph (Qualis Research Associates, 1998) appears in Appendix H. In addition, references are made to the narratives (Appendix C), the meta-matrix chart (Appendix D), and paradigm logic models (Appendix F).
I. Introduction

II. Principal: Dr. Patricia Parks

III. Administrative Context
   A. Administrative Setting
   B. Administrator Characteristics

IV. Administrative Strategy
   A. Core Phenomenon: Principled Marketing
   B. Strategies
      1. Developing and Mentoring
      2. Recognizing
      3. Rewarding
      4. Monitoring
   C. Conditions
      1. Vision
      2. Care
      3. Equity
   D. Outcomes
      1. Administrative Mission
      2. District Support
      3. Teambuilding
      4. Planning and Organizing

V. Making a Contribution
The Professional Principal

Case Report

Introduction

The term, professional, is a word that applies easily to a variety of occupations, which require extensive and specialized training. Within a job description, it implies expertise and virtue. When it relates to a person, it engenders feelings of trust and respect. Professional is a consequential word which when associated with a group of people gives rise to the expectation of occupational excellence in work product and work ethic.

A professional principal is one who identifies with the character, spirit, methods, principles, and practices of educational administration. She is concerned with establishing a strong link with the profession seeking out and adopting those attitudes and behaviors that are associated with being professionally successful. In addition to refining those attitudes and behaviors to establish competence, the professional principal involves herself in professional groups and community activities where she often assumes leadership positions.

Principal: Dr. Patricia Parks

Dr. Patricia Parks personifies the professional style. She is the principal of Hillside High School. Now in her second year of the principalship at Hillside High, Patricia has been a practicing school administrator for approximately 13 years. In addition to being an assistant principal, Patricia served four years as the principal of Hillside Junior High, the feeder school to Hillside High.

Patricia’s administrative style is characterized as professional because of her identification with the social norms and performance expectations of public school administration. Her focus is on the staff (administrative focus) in order to serve the educational needs of children (administrative beneficiary). (Appendix D, page 8)

This strong identification, however, is not purely self-serving. Patricia’s strong sense of integrity (administrative value) directs her attention towards serving others. She has always viewed education as a helping profession (service view). This service orientation extends beyond the school into the community adding an altruistic aura to her professional style. (Appendix D, page 5)

Administrative Context

The administrative context (administrative setting and administrative characteristics) represents the circumstances and conditions that influence the principal’s administration of the school. (Appendix D, Pages 6, 7 and 8; Appendix F, C1 Paradigm)

The professional principal focuses interest primarily upon the broader profession of education. This differentiates her from other principals because her focus in professional life is cosmopolitan. Involving herself at multiple levels within the occupation elevates the
professional principal from a localite, someone that focuses internally in their organizational role, to that of a cosmopolite. A cosmopolite is someone who extends the locus of her involvement beyond the local venue to a role that operates within the profession at large.

Administrative Setting

Hillside High School is a prestigious suburban public school composed of grades 10, 11, and 12. It has a strong academic and collegiate preparation focus with active parent involvement and support.

Hillside has a population of approximately 1300 students and an instructional staff of approximately 100. Three assistants administer the school with the principal. One of them also acts as athletic director. Hillside is situated in a county described as a valley area containing rich farmlands, wooded areas, beautiful caverns, and rolling hills. Not far from the school is Hillside Junior High, which serves the public education needs of the same community. This community is primarily composed of upper middle-income, primarily white, homogenous families who have strong educational values (school characteristics).

The county, within which Hillside is located, has approximately 80,000 residents. Four high schools provide educational services to approximately 13,300 students. Two of the four high schools have female principals (district characteristics).

Patricia enjoys a good working relationship with her school community as well as the district office and district superintendent, who is a white male. She was previously employed as principal of Hillside Junior High; and she moved to the high school principalship with the district’s approval and support.

Administrative Characteristics

In her second year in the principalship (administrative background), Patricia seems to thrive in the new setting. Patricia is oriented to social interaction; she enjoys working with people. Vivacious, self-confident, hardworking, eager and responsible, Patricia epitomizes the American work ethic. These occupationally associative traits together with optimism, a self-described core attribute, evince a high-profile personal image focused on achievement. (Appendix D, page 4)

This highly visible image is sustained through Patricia’s strong identification with work and role: her agenda and the school agenda are one in the same. Patricia’s work efforts direct simultaneously at both agendas. This shared agenda serves both the school and Patricia as recognition and success accrue to both interactively.

Patricia’s strategy for attaining the principalship was to adopt the attitudes and behaviors associated with being professional and perfecting them until they became stellar. Rather than attract attention and build credibility by being extremely innovative or stylistic, Patricia honed her skills until she was able to stand out by fitting in. Metaphorically speaking, she consummated “the talk and the walk” endeavoring to become the ideal principal.
This modeling strategy is most probably the same manner in which Patricia earned recognition as a teacher. She found herself disenchanted, however, with the teaching profession because, to use her term, it was “flat”, leaving her nowhere to advance occupationally.

Administration was an attractive career option because it afforded Patricia an avenue of service similar to teaching where she could continue to be involved in education. She was ready for a new commitment and willing to work hard to serve children on a larger, more broad-based scale. (Appendix H, C1 Doc 1, Lines 840-853)

P: As the leader in a school, I think you are quite a teacher. Your classroom is just bigger, your age span is just broader, and there is a lot more to teach.

So the teacher aspect of being the leader in a school is something that I enjoy. I have enjoyed that from the time I was a small child being able to share with others how to do things.

Patricia embodies a popular management philosophy called “management by objective”. Her personal commitment to excellence aligns with this philosophy and sustains a managerial momentum focused on practical results. Patricia sets goals and then moves forward to achieve them. Through her promotional and modeling efforts, she encourages others to make a commitment to change and “Be the best they can be” (administrative motto). (Appendix H, C1 Doc 1, Lines 20-30)

**Administrative Strategy: Principled Marketing**

Patricia is a moral leader in many ways. Integrity is her moral compass, and she works diligently to uphold professional principles and practices in her administrative work. Ethical principles like honesty and compassion guide Patricia’s conduct, as do healthy practices like managing change and practicing lifelong learning. They are the foundation upon which Patricia’s professional persona is built and without which there would be no strength, consistency, or credibility in professional style. It guides and directs her actions and is a standard against which she measures her own performance.

Patricia’s administrative strategy, principled marketing, is a uniquely persuasive strategy involving piloting people in order to persuade them to promote school programs. In a manner characterized by integrity and congeniality. Patricia uses this strategy to influence members of the school community (administrative focus) to support the school mission.

Marketing succinctly describes Patricia’s behavior as she promotes the goals, activities, and accomplishments of Hillside in order to persuade people to “buy into” the school agenda. Much as an advertiser solicits buyers, Patricia solicits support from constituents of the school community.

Patricia uses principled marketing to influence people’s thinking. Through the use of promotional strategies which consist of recognizing,
rewarding, mentoring, and monitoring, Patricia appeals to people’s logic and emotion. (Appendix F, C2 Paradigm)

Recognizing means praising and expressing appreciation for effective performance or significant contributions. Patricia talks regularly and publishes information about the Hillside High School community. If it is football season, she talks about football; if it is the holiday season, she talks about the band and choral concerts; if it is graduation, she talks about who is going to college and where they are going. She talks about the students, the staff, accomplishments of the school, as well as the plans of the school for the future. In supervising the school newspaper and newsletters, Patricia ensures they highlight all of Hillside’s accomplishments. Publicizing Hillside in this manner supports the educational expectations of the community. (Appendix C, Case 1, page 50)

Patricia enjoys personally recognizing people as well because it demonstrates publicly how people are working together for the school (teambuilding). During a faculty meeting one morning, she recognized the new teachers for their participation at the ball game while simultaneously promoting the one on Friday night. (Appendix H, C1 Doc 2, Lines 607-625)

P: We have a ball game coming up on Friday night and ah, our girls’ tennis team is winning. And, let me just say that as we are building this participation effort on the part of the students, it is good to see you there [too] and [good] that they know you are there watching them.

So, try to come out when you can I know we have some dedicated teachers who came out to the parking lot on Friday night after the game, and they had a blast. Some of them--right back there in the back--some of our new teachers--were just having a lot of fun.

Patricia acknowledges, appreciates, and rewards people for their commitment and service to Hillside. Rewarding is different from recognizing in that it involves the distribution of tangible awards.

Patricia rewarded one staff member for his outstanding work. She summoned him to her office one afternoon and gave him a shiny red apple (administrative symbol). She told him that she appreciated the especially fine job he did preparing the school for back-to-school night. (Appendix C, Case 1, page 35)

Earlier in the year, Patricia arranged for all of the staff to receive professionally prepared business cards that they could use with parents and district personnel. She considers her teachers to be “instructional experts” and quite worthy of this symbol of expertise.
Perhaps the most significant way in which Patricia motivates people is through mentoring. She values and enjoys developing personnel in skill acquisition, professional development, and career advancement. She believes that this sets the stage for win-win situations whereby people benefit personally while the organization benefits professionally. (Appendix C, Case 1, page 49)

One afternoon, Patricia discussed decisional steps with the math department chairperson who was facing a serious problem with one of the members of her department.

P: It is a matter of judgement; that is why you have these different levels. I have to make decisions about things like that before I take it to Dr. Long [Co. Curriculum Supervisor], and before I take it to Dr. Stowe [Asst. Superintendent], or before I take it to the Superintendent.

Patricia gave the chairperson a great deal of understanding about the delicacy of this situation because the department chairperson had administrative aspirations, which Patricia knew.

P: And, you also know that you are interested in administration; and you don’t want to do anything that is going to tie the record.

Patricia openly supports others aspiring to positions of leadership, informally through interpersonal conversation and formally through affiliation with professional organizations. She is active and considers herself a model in supporting her professional associations as well as in supporting administrative programs, such as mentoring, which the local university sponsors.

In working with two business teachers on a course proposal for special education students, Patricia carefully coaches them in how to present the course proposal so it will be positively accepted. (Appendix H, C1 Doc 4, Lines 153-163)

P: And, my only concern would be that it would be viewed as not mainstreamed.

I think you would want to approach it from the standpoint that you would want a period set aside for an adaptive computer class. That would enable you to give more individual attention to working with those kids, so that they could advance in a way that would make them more employable.
In the passage, Patricia says her only concern is the way in which the proposal might be “viewed”. She addresses her own concern by volunteering to check with the district supervisors. This demonstrates her sensitivity to status and cautiousness to misperceptions about how others may perceive things (monitoring).

Patricia is extremely cautious about perceptions, which is part of the monitoring process she employs. Monitoring means to check on and it includes gathering information, evaluating it, and identifying trends or patterns. Patricia employs the monitoring process on two levels.

On the organizational level, monitoring is associated with checking up on people and their relationship to the goals. Patricia does this primarily through observation and dialogue. Because she is socially oriented, she is highly participatory in school affairs and gathers a lot of information through talking with people (supporting).

Patricia uses rules, roles, and responsibilities as a standard against which to measure people’s performance. And, if their performance is lacking, she reminds them about performance expectations (adjusting).

On the personal level, Patricia monitors perceptions about herself. As she presents her persona, she is constantly monitoring for acceptance. When monitoring indicates that the presentation is not effective, Patricia says that she “adjusts”; that is, she makes corrections and continues.

Patricia has a powerfully seductive persona. She has fashioned a highly convincing professional image that is charismatic in nature. It arouses strong emotions as staff identifies with the ideal role model she sets forth.

P: But, remember one of the ways that I feel is important to lead is through modeling and being an example.

Through the processes of initiating, building, and sustaining, Patricia seeks, in her words, “to understand how they [staff members] think and operate” as well as “know their capabilities”. Once she understands a person, Patricia uses role-playing and polyphasic attending to maintain the relationship. (Appendix C, Case 1, pages 29-43)

During role-play, Patricia constellates her individual characteristics and behavioral processes in different ways to play various roles with others much as an actor does. A frequent persona extension Patricia makes with her staff is into the role of master teacher from which she instructs others. She also extends effectively into the roles of mother, coach, cheerleader, counselor, and mentor. These roles are situationally projected depending upon the matter at hand and the conversational context. Relationship is further sustained through polyphasic attending.

Being able to attend to multiple phases of a conversation simultaneously is referred to as polyphasic attending. During this process, Patricia manages multiple dimensions of a conversation simultaneously. This includes the substantive as well as affective conversational content thus allowing Patricia to manage people in all
of their ambiguity and incongruity without losing her own focus. This facilitates the mutual exchange of information and feelings resulting in a strong sense of rapport and understanding between Patricia and her conversational partner.

While all people play roles to one extent or another within the context of their daily lives, it is the precision and frequency with which Patricia does this that distinguishes her from other people. Patricia has the ability to call upon a role, within any context; and through that role, she attends to people in a polyphasic manner. These processes are so naturally executed that they go virtually undetected much as a chameleon changes color in adapting to its environment.

Patricia uses her ability to create a relational framework within which she maintains connections (relational transactions) and makes decisions (decisional transactions). Patricia’s relational and decisional effectiveness set the stage for bringing people together (associating). By connecting people to work together supporting projects and activities, Patricia builds teams for Hillside. Patricia particularly enjoys this part of the job, which she refers to as "coalition building". (Appendix D, page 7)

Patricia extends these processes to district and community interactions through networking. She gathers information while simultaneously promoting her own agenda. She reports that she never attends a meeting without an objective; she is masterful at arranging quick conversations to say hello, pay a compliment, or take care of a problem.

The power of these processes cannot be underestimated in their ability to set the stage for Patricia to take charge and advance her agenda. Having gained people’s confidence and trust through the development of rapport, Patricia can now be powerfully persuasive, especially as she demonstrates passion and commitment to promoting the goals of the school.

Focused on high profile achievement (administrative vision), Patricia’s administrative actions are ordered by a convergent thought process directed at results. Like a football quarterback, as she is fondly referred to by at least one community member, Patricia has a game plan in mind and likes to keep the ball in play in a fast paced and directive manner.

Patricia’s goal orientation is fueled by an enthusiastic sense of collective purpose. If someone is not with her, he had better get out of the way. Although the following quote refers to people sitting in reserved football stadium seats without permission, it typifies Patricia’s thinking when it comes to achieving results.

P: Well, now this is just how the real world is. You just have to ask people to get out of the way.

Although she tends to be impatient with resistance, Patricia will try every play in the book to get people to join the team. She understands she cannot accomplish the mission alone. She knows she needs people with her, and she networks to promote her projects and enlist aid. In
talking with the business teachers, she asks them to think about who could help with the new course. (Appendix H, C1 Doc 3, Lines 199-200)

P: Now, we don’t want to leave anyone out who can help us with this project, once we get committed to it.

Principled marketing is outcomes based. Through the traditional managerial processes of planning, organizing, actuating, and controlling, Patricia directs efforts towards the accomplishment of common goals and objectives. (Appendix C, Case 1, pages 58-67)

Appealing to the highest in people, Patricia will continually remind people about expectations regarding the rules, roles, and responsibilities. She will resort to restructuring roles and responsibilities if her appeals go unheeded.

The area of student discipline receives important consideration from the administrative team as they periodically review and adjust behavioral expectations and procedures for students. Patricia is careful to be equitable and fair in all administrative matters, focusing first on what is best for students educationally.

As Patricia maintains a focus on students’ education, a maternal motif emerges. She can often be found talking with students in the hallway where she will pay a compliment, inquire about how they are doing, or remind them of their responsibility, if it appears they are being negligent. Sometimes she will meet with students in small groups. She meets with all students who are about to receive their driver’s license. She jokingly concludes these conversations with an admonition that she does not want to read about them in Sunday’s paper, unless they are receiving an award. (Appendix D, page 5)

Patricia encounters resistance to advancing goals when her relationship links are weak, and she is moving rapidly. Not everyone thinks as quickly on his or her feet as Patricia does nor values achievement the way she does. And, although her “big picture” orientation is a very valuable perspective, when coupled with a habit of hurry, it can create situations where people and project details go unnoticed.

Resistance can also come up when Patricia’s competitive spirit is engaged. Constantly aware of her status and position with other people, Patricia likes to define and control the course of events. When that control is challenged, she is prone to compete to reestablish it. Patricia is very ambitious, and competition is in her blood. As odd as it sounds, Patricia will sometimes “compete to connect” attempting to establish herself as top dog of a group.

Games of one-upmanship can occur particularly as Patricia relates to men. Identifying with them through sports and war invoke her matching processes associated with competition, battle, and, above all, winning. Competing is a process that Patricia needs to employ with sensitivity and balance when working with her male colleagues. As a female in an administrative world predominantly populated by men, Patricia may find that connecting with men through a collegial role, which honors her femininity, will more readily earn her the respect she seeks. (Appendix C, Case 1, pages 20-22; Appendix H, C1 Doc 5)
Fortunately, resistance is the exception rather than the rule at Hillside High. Preferring to attend selectively to positive feedback and reframe failure, Patricia usually tunes out opposition expanding instead upon promoting participation and restructuring where necessary. She rarely finds fault with people, preferring instead to find remedies because she views almost every experience as a learning opportunity. Connecting people to the goals is the sum and substance of Patricia’s administrative orientation; and being the chameleon, she will work hard until she finds a presentation that sells.

Patricia exhibits a strong commitment to service. It appears to be a natural extension of her social focus because she is interested in people. One of the major ways in which Patricia likes to help people is by encouraging them to be as professional as she herself is. (Appendix D, page 5)

Patricia actively encourages professional camaraderie by endorsing responsible citizenship practices and volunteer activities. Patricia’s integrity and subscription to service move her behavior out of the realm of self-service and into the realm of selfless-service. (Appendix C, Case 1, pages 67-71)

Making a Contribution

The workplace is Patricia’s natural habitat, and it is within that milieu that she thrives. Coincidental or not, Patricia is well positioned in a high school organization, and a culture, which values the same things she does: achievement, success, and service. Hillside is a high performance, affluent school whose students expect to matriculate to prestigious colleges and universities. (Appendix D, page 4)

Enabling people to be the best that they can be, teaching and learning, establishing objectives, instilling character, and working with others cooperatively—these are all prominent themes, high on Patricia’s personal agenda as well as the agenda of today’s public schools.

Valuing achievement, Patricia seeks to create relationships in order to foster good will and build programs that garner credibility. The historical symbol of education, apples, adorn Patricia’s office and represent the polished quality of her professional presentation and commitment to educating students (administrative symbol). (Appendix C, Case 2, page 22)

Patricia expresses a maternal sense of responsibility for the Hillside school community. With an open heart, Patricia demonstrates genuine care and concern for the welfare of others. Guided by her own self-assurance and positive attitude, Patricia offers understanding while creating awareness for self-responsibility. She is a supportive principal who is readily available to patiently listen to problems and offer sympathy when someone is upset (supporting). Patricia encourages others by facilitating and financing their endeavors with her own time and energy. She believes that an investment in one person is a local investment in the school as well as a larger service to the community. (Appendix D, page 5; Appendix H, C1 Doc 1, Lines 895-908)
P: We have had some examples where there was concern for the well-being of a custodian; we have had concerns for the well-being of teachers; the well-being of students; even the well-being of certain parents.

One of the calls I had yesterday that I had to take care of was a parent who really just needed someone to listen--having difficulty dealing with her husband going into cancer surgery and the impact that would have on her son here at school.

So, you have concern for the well-being of your people in the school, students, and the people in the community.

Being successful and helping others to be successful bring Patricia a great deal of satisfaction. In the conversational segment below, Patricia (P) and one of her assistant principals (AP) discuss helping a teacher obtain materials for one of the state-mandated tests (SLT). (Appendix H, C1 Doc 5, Lines 231-240)

AP: Well, Donna is having a remedial session tomorrow and one on Thursday.

P: Okay.

AP: And, if we can give her some materials, it would be . . . .

P: Yeah, well, maybe I can help her to be a success.

Through principled marketing, Patricia extends herself in service to the Hillside community. Guided by her own professional principles and practices, Patricia sees herself as part of a greater human family. She identifies with people’s need to feel good about themselves (administrative identification) and, therefore, wants to help people attain their personal best (administrative motivation), which increases their dignity and regard for themselves--their self-esteem (administrative motivation outcome). The distribution of business cards to all staff members demonstrates this principle and earns Patricia respect and goodwill. (Appendix D, page 8)

Patricia’s ambitious (administrative fit characteristic) nature is honored in her school community. She exemplifies their values of diligence, achievement, and optimism; and she does it with integrity. It is her promotional style matched to the needs and values of the school community that explain, at least in part, how Patricia is suited to the principalship in this school (administrative fit). (Appendix D, page 8)
As people sense Patricia’s inner drive and high expectancy attitude, they are motivated to make contributions to the school. They view her, in some ways, as a professional paragon and are inspired to reach for the highest level within themselves out of which selfless service is ultimately born.
THE GUARDIAN PRINCIPAL
Case Report Outline

I. Introduction

II. Principal: Dr. Gayle Grant

III. Administrative Context
C. Administrative Setting
D. Administrator Characteristics

VI. Administrative Strategy
A. Core Phenomenon: Steadfast Shepherding
B. Strategies
   1. Empowering
   2. Communicating
   3. Safeguarding
   4. Troubleshooting
C. Conditions
   1. Vision
   2. Care
   3. Equity
   4. Motivating and Inspiring
   5. Teambuilding
   6. Camouflage
D. Outcomes
   1. Administrative Mission
   2. District Acceptance

V. Working for the Greater Good
THE GUARDIAN PRINCIPAL

Case Report

Introduction

The term, guardian, is derived from the word, guard. It means to watch over or keep safe from harm. The term guardian extends the meaning of guard to protect and preserve the well-being of someone or something. Broadening the definition and applying it to school administration, the term, guardian, suggests entrustment.

A guardian principal is a person who identifies with the care, trust, and responsibility incumbent upon the profession of educational administration. (Appendix H, C2 Doc1, Lines 916-920)

G: Power. Actually for me it translates into responsibility.

I am ultimately responsible for what goes on here.

Gayle views the power associated with her role as responsibility. She assumes the responsibility of caring for the school organization.

Principal: Dr. Gayle Grant

Dr. Gayle Grant personifies the guardian administrative style. She is the principal of Ethan Allen High School. Now in her fifth year of the principalship of Ethan Allen, Gayle has been a practicing school administrator for approximately nine years, four of which have been in service at the middle school level (two as vice principal and two as principal).

Gayle is a very supportive and caring principal. One of the hall principals (HP) reports that Gayle is the one responsible for a positive change in the school climate.

HP: Before Dr. Grant, there was a lot of miscommunication, infighting, and misunderstanding.

Dr. Grant brought in more of a caring attitude; it is touchy, feely.

Gayle expects that people will work together, as she does, towards common goals through relationships characterized by care, trust, respect, and open-minded fairness. She seeks to create a safe school characterized by a collegial atmosphere (vision). (Appendix H, C2 Doc 1, Lines 766-784)

G: But instruction is our primary focus assuming everything is safe.

But safety is probably the very first thing, because without a safe
environment; and, we have had to
deal with a lot of issues of
violence in the schools.

You know we pay attention to what
is going on nationally; and,
we have had some tough issues to
deal with on this campus in terms
of safety.

But then there are issues within
the community. We have had guns
that we have had to involve the
police with.

Gayle's administrative style is characterized as guardian because she
maintains the integrity of the organization in order to ensure the
welfare of the people associated with it. Her focus is on serving the
school staff to support them in meeting the educational needs of the
students (administrative beneficiary) through a style characterized by
guiding people while guarding school program operations.

Oriented to service, Gayle views her position as a service agent.

G: We can look at lots of ways to go
about working with any part of our
population. Students are our customers,
and we are the service agent.

She is less concerned about personal recognition and credit and more
concerned about creating positive outcomes (mission) for kids
(administrative beneficiary). (Appendix H, C2 Doc 1, Lines 934-938)

G: And, when things happen and happen
well, it doesn’t make any
difference to me who gets the
credit as long as the kids get the
services.

Administrative Context

The administrative context (administrative setting and administrative
characteristics) represents the circumstances and conditions that
influence the principal’s administration of the school. (Appendix D,
Pages 6, 7, and 8; Appendix F, C2 Paradigm)

The guardian principal focuses interest upon the local school
organization. Although there is an awareness of state and national
organizational structures and professional activities, the principal’s
attention goes primarily to managing the daily operations of the school
in a very responsible and responsive manner. A principal focused in
this manner is a localite, someone who focuses internally in their
organizational role.

The occupational interest and involvement in the internal affairs of
the school differentiates the guardian principal from other principals
because of where personal loyalties and commitments lie. This outlook
complements the administrative practice of the guardian, because it enriches the concentration and focus needed to safeguard the complex systems and structures that characterize large urban school organizations.

**Administrative Setting**

Ethan Allen is a comprehensive, campus-style urban high school, which sprawls across one hundred acres and serves approximately 1600 students. Because of the many buildings, there are a variety of activities and programs available to students. Four academic halls and an educational technical center are complemented by a variety of support facilities including a library, physical education centers, and auditorium complexes (school characteristics).

School governance is premised upon a philosophy known as site-based management. Although there are seven administrative positions under the principal, including hall principals and administrative assistants, there is also a site council. A number of school community personnel serve on the site council. Chaired by the principal, the council participates in school governance by overseeing selected activities and programs.

There is an ever-present concern for safety on campus as evidenced by the security force that assists staff with preserving the learning environment. They monitor internal campus activity and maintain the boundaries that are delineated by the wall that separates the school from the surrounding community. (Appendix H, C2 Doc 4, Lines 670-677)

The city, within which Ethan Allen is located, has approximately 96,000 residents and provides educational services to a total of 13,200 pupils. There are two high schools in the district; both have female principals (district characteristics).

Gayle’s administrative abilities and beliefs serve her effectively as principal of an inner-city school. She demonstrated this by establishing order on campus and restoring confidence in the school administration as she assumed the principalship. Gayle’s cooperative spirit is engaging and is integral to her administrative style.

**Administrative Characteristics**

In her fifth year of the high school principalship (administrative background), Gayle, a very hardworking individual, takes her job quite seriously. She is loyal to the people with whom she works and dutiful in her responsibilities. “You can depend on me” is a credo that depicts the spirit with which Gayle administers; it means you can trust me for I am loyal. Behind her reserved manner and outwardly calm appearance is a hyperalert presence, which like a sentry stands guard to protect the people and preserve the school programs (administrative traits).

Reliable and responsible, Gayle is skilled at organizing people to accomplish tasks. She values teamwork and loyalty; and she seeks to develop these qualities in her staff. As a junior high school principal, Gayle received national recognition for her school’s team organization and achievement.
Because she is trustworthy and loyal herself, Gayle is a solid role model. People view her as open, honest, and approachable. In addition to being a good listener, Gayle is very friendly and engaging, even playful at times. She solicits people’s opinions and feelings as well as their criticisms and requests, in an easygoing and warmly placating manner.

Despite her strong interpersonal skills, Gayle prefers to maintain a low-profile image. When attending school activities, for example, she remains in the background content to quietly listen and observe. No stranger to the spotlight, however, Gayle will elevate her profile to attend to what needs doing, such as when she must institute change.

Highly practical and persistent, Gayle possesses strong problem-solving skills including noteworthy investigative and analytic abilities. Her skepticism facilitates the development of insightful assessments and imaginative perspectives, which she uses to stimulate and manage change.

Relying upon her background and experience as well as a strong sense of self, Gayle projects dignity and competence (rendering presence). This projection supports her behavioral repertoire for accomplishing the school mission. (Appendix D, Pages 4, 6; Appendix C, Case 2 Narrative)

**Administrative Strategy: Steadfast Shepherding**

Gayle maintains a vigilant presence (administrative value) as principal of Ethan Allen. It is a complex school organization due to its size, campus-style organizational structure, and clientele. Heavily influenced by decisions made at the district level as well as in the community, Ethan Allen is a dynamic institution, which requires constant administrative attention (administrative setting).

During the last four years as principal, Gayle has led the Ethan Allen staff (administrative focus) through two significant change efforts. The first change effort involved turning the school climate around, which Gayle did just after assuming the principalship. (Appendix H, C2 Doc 1, Lines 163-175)

G: The real issue was setting a positive school climate and attending to the climate at that time.

Because kids were beginning to feel the negative impact because of the disgruntled faculty, and the media was on campus constantly involved with the issues of people not getting along with people.
The second change effort involved reforming the school governance framework, which primarily affected decisional authority. That change effort spawned the creation of the site-based council, whose members represent constituent groups from the school community. (Appendix H, C2 Doc 1, Lines 949-952)

The creation of the site council provided an official avenue through which school and community leaders could participate in school-wide decision-making. Gayle viewed it as a primary means through which people from different areas of the school could work together for the welfare of the students (mission). As chairperson, Gayle was both facilitator and spokesperson for the group. She articulates this to the student government leaders one morning. (Appendix H, C2 Doc 2, Lines 9-199)

G: As a leader, you may not just decide [on an issue]; you must represent your group.

During the change efforts, it was incumbent upon Gayle to maintain stability and order so that daily operations could continue and students would receive educational services. In order to safeguard the school while managing forces impinging on the organization, Gayle uses an administrative strategy called steadfast shepherding.

Shepherding describes Gayle’s strategy for safeguarding the orderly execution of school operations. This is accomplished through extensive planning and coordinated efforts to organize the many and varied organizational functions and procedures. Steadfast describes the vigilant manner in which Gayle shepherds the school organization.

Through the processes of empowering, communicating, consensus building, and troubleshooting, Gayle endeavors to work with the staff in planning and organizing to identify ways in which to improve the delivery of educational services to students (mission). (Appendix F, C2 Paradigm)

Preferring to work in a cooperative framework focused on common goals, Gayle believes in using her power to empower others, even though she is still accountable for outcomes. (Appendix H, C2 Doc 1, Lines 980-982)

G: It is empowering others to do the job really, but ultimately being responsible for whatever happens.
Gayle empowers people through a distributed network of authority. Using formal roles and procedures, she delegates and distributes power and authority among members of the organization. These members include hall principals, department chairpersons, committee heads, site council members, and a loosely organized group of people called “communicators” whose function is to listen to and report complaints about the school.

Gayle meets regularly with the hall principals who are empowered as “principals” of their respective buildings. They manage discipline, teacher evaluation, as well as facilities and resources for their respective halls. They work closely with the departments housed in their buildings (e.g., English department, math department). They join with Gayle in working with the departmental chairpersons.

The department chairpersons are an important group in the school because they provide leadership to the teachers. Gayle considers the teachers to be the “first line of instructional leadership”; and, as such, she relies on them to provide leadership to the students.

A significant amount of decisional authority belongs to the site council, which oversees and approves selected school activities and operations. Gayle chairs the site council, which meets regularly to make decisions about instruction, staff development, budget, and matters pertaining to the school as a whole. The council has the authority to consult directly with school staff as well as the district office.

Gayle complements this distribution of power by concealing her own (camouflage). By diminishing her positional power as “the principal”, she places herself in a lateral position with her staff. She believes that this allows others to exercise their influence and authority more freely, which builds commitment and promotes consensus building.

While assuming a lateral position facilitates communication and consensus; it also, presents opportunities for a principal to be more easily questioned. Handling questions, and disagreement which might arise from the answers to those questions, requires that a principal possess a strong sense of purpose and a great deal of courage (administrative value). Gayle exhibited purposefulness and courage as she initiated the third school reform effort at Ethan Allen.

The superintendent charged the two high school principals in the district with instituting restructuring. This involved altering the school day to a blocked schedule design and strengthening lateral departmental relationships to facilitate interdisciplinary instruction.

A team player at the district level and loyal to her superintendent (district characteristics), Gayle has effectively handled school change initiatives before. She did see merit in the proposed reform as it appeared to hold promise for meeting Ethan Allen’s needs for safety, instruction, and empowerment.
In considering how to institute restructuring, Gayle saw two options. She could either use her positional authority to dictate the change effective immediately, as the principal of Ethan Allen’s sister school had done; or, she could use a consensus building process to guide the school to choose restructuring while guarding ongoing school operations. Trusting in her own ability to manage a school-wide dialogue, Gayle chose to use the consensual decisional process.

Sensitive to the fact that when an organization is facing change, the need for information, trust, and open communication is high, Gayle decided to conduct a series of meetings with the school community about the proposed reform initiatives. She worked through the organizational structure to inform, invite dialogue, and build agreement.

In order to stimulate thinking about a better future, Gayle called upon the instructional teams to reflect upon a new vision for Ethan Allen (venerating vision). A day had been set aside for this, and now it was sharing time.

G: Let's call our meeting to order. Thank you for calling this meeting to talk about your vision; the focus will be the student. I am really here to be a listener.

The vision invitation catalyzed the dialogue process about alternative school day models and how that could improve the delivery of instruction. Staff members presented different models, through various forums, for consideration and discussion. This generated a lot of information and opinions, which permeated the communication channels.

Gayle actively used all channels of communication to disseminate information and build agreement around restructuring. She used the organizational structure to manage the formal channels of communication and the school’s "communicator" group, as well as trusted staff members, to manage informal communications (managing the communication network).

Gayle held school-wide meetings as well as team meetings. She maintained “sharing” time on staff meeting agendas, and maintained an "open door policy" for "communicators" who collected information from the informal network. She even recruited support by identifying and supporting staff leaders who would advocate for restructuring. She relied upon them to act as information conduits between herself and the larger organization.

G: And, again that is having those leaders out there that you trust, that want the best for kids.

By meeting formally with department teams and other groups in the school, Gayle managed information and monitored reaction through teambuilding. When people participate through groups (assembling), Gayle contends there is better thinking, which positively impacts planning and organizing. (Appendix H, C2 Doc 1, Lines 984-988)
G: But, I believe that the best decisions are made when you have collective kinds of input. When you have team, team-kind of decisions.

During the discussions, Gayle expected that people would respect her as well as each other. (Appendix H, C2 Doc 1, Lines 278-284)

G: The one thing that I did require is that they [staff] be professional about whatever issue they wanted to talk about; and, they be respectful of one another and trust.

Upon a foundation of trust and respect (administrative values), Gayle managed information and feelings in order to facilitate the creation of mutually agreeable decisions. She accomplished this by bringing a caring and fair-minded presence to the process, by articulating a shared vision based on members' input, and by using logical and emotional appeals that inspire cooperation.

Through her presence, Gayle provided an atmosphere within which people could process information and feelings about the restructuring proposal. Through active listening with concern for each person's particular situation, Gayle acknowledged people's unique needs and sought to address those needs in ways which would affirm their commitment and dedication to the school.

In considering "what is best for kids", Gayle challenged the staff to examine their current educational practices to see if they still served the needs of today’s students.

G: We cannot continue to do things in old ways. It is a time to examine and reexamine; we must look at things another way.

I don't want to see us doing the same thing that we have done since 1960. We want to keep the good things up. Everyone is restructuring; and we don't want dead kids.

In order to help staff "look at things another way", Gayle provided them with relevant research and proposed models as well as with opportunities for on-site visits to schools that had already restructured. Gayle challenged the staff to look closely at the research (managing information) and what other schools were doing around the state.

G: What is good for kids? Are you going to do what you have always done? Or, are you going to look at the research and open your minds?

Gayle encouraged people to examine the research because as she explained to them, "I would like to move on a research basis".
G: And so we are looking at anything you read or hear, what other professionals are doing in other school systems that you think would be good for our kids. Please bring those to the table, and we will look at them along with the department chairperson packets, ASCD articles, and models from other schools.

Thank you all for being here. You really are a research-based department.

In addition to recognizing staff members for their consideration of restructuring, Gayle also appealed to them through their sense of professionalism. She argued that staff could deliver instructional services more effectively through broader decisional control over the students. In speaking to the Special Education department about restructuring, Gayle gently challenged them to assume more responsibility by asking them if they want to be empowered.

G: I guess what we want to know is are you ready to handle more responsibility in how you want to group and deal with kids?

Like if we gave you the numbers of kids you had and the proper FTE apportionment, do you, as a Department, want to deliver those services during the day?

In managing consensus building, Gayle assumes equal footing in discussing and debating a change that would have far reaching consequences for the people and programs at Ethan Allen. In sharing decisional power as well as information, Gayle opens the way for conflict and confrontation (managing conflict).

The English department expressed some strong feelings against restructuring. Gayle listened attentively and addressed the teachers (T) concerns acknowledging the difficulties they face in teaching an urban student population: absenteeism, uncooperativeness, short attention spans, and negative attitudes (managing feelings). (Appendix H, C2 Doc 3, Lines 1150-1160)

T: Kids are saying they don’t like it [block scheduling].

G: What are kids saying they are doing? How do they know?

T: I can’t stand some kids in class for 45 minutes [let alone a block of time].

G: Listen and then share what you are doing. These students are hard to teach.
Part of the resistance to restructuring concerned the timeline. The change was proposed for the following school term, which was only a few months away. Staff members believed there was too little time to examine and prepare for the change or secure the necessary resources, like additional materials and staff development training.

Gayle assured the staff that monies from the budget would be allocated to support the reform. As chairperson of the site council, which oversees many aspect of the budget, Gayle would ensure that there was order (upholding policy and procedures) and equity in providing for the needs of the school.

The faculty was also suspicious that this change was really a directive from the district office because of what had occurred at their sister school. In addition, they knew Gayle was participating in school reform meetings at the district office with the principal of their sister school.

The English department confronted Gayle with the fact that they understood that this restructuring decision was, as one teacher put it, a "done deal". They claimed that is what they had heard from the district office. Relying on the trust she had with the staff, Gayle responded by reminding them that no change could take place without their support. (Appendix H, C2 Doc 3, Lines 1191-1193)

G: We need your support, and we are not going to do it unless everyone is committed.

In some ways, Gayle did camouflage the restructuring issue by selectively controlling what came into view. In choosing to frame the restructuring initiative as a proposal which would improve instruction, Gayle attempted to remain loyal to everyone. She wanted to support the superintendent, honor her own convictions as a principal, and preserve the empowered foundation of the school.

Gayle knew it would be very difficult to dictate a change of this magnitude without causing disgruntlement, which rumor had it was occurring at their sister school. Gayle wanted the support of the staff. By establishing a dialogic framework within which to process the issues, Gayle believed she could secure the support needed to institute the reform the following year. Some departments were supportive. The Math department, for example, had many questions but also had solutions. Gayle showed her appreciation while reinforcing her vision. (Appendix H, C2 Doc 4, Lines 824-830)

G: I really appreciate your optimism. You put concerns on the table, but you also put solutions there. We don’t want to feel like prison wardens. We want a positive school climate and respect and to create a climate that has peer respect.

Holding fast to her own vision, Gayle obscured the role of the district office in the decisional process. with the best of intentions. The
uncertainty, however, created strong feelings and opposition which, in turn, caused miscommunication. Troubleshooting the consensus effort became an important administrative task, particularly where the informal communication channels were concerned. (Appendix H, C2 Doc 1, Lines 1336-1350)

G: You need to be aware of it because there is a lot of political, a lot of informal networking going on all of the time.

The informal grapevine or communication system probably is more powerful than the formal network that you set up in any system.

And you have got to have people who trust you enough to give clues about what the informal network is carrying out there, too.

Rumors were one of the largest concerns. (Appendix H, C2 Doc 1, Lines 380-398)

G: Sometimes rumors would get out: information that was not being processed completely that would cause unrest and cause people to be uncomfortable.

And, we would try to put out a fact sheet; or, in some cases, it might have been just one or two people involved with the issue.

And, we would try on a one-to-one basis to resolve it.

One of the purposes of holding numerous face-to-face meetings about restructuring was to identify the people associated with the concerns. As Gayle puts it, she wants to “attach people to issues” so she can be sure that she “fixes the person as well as the problem”.

She wants people satisfied. In order to accomplish this, Gayle must flesh out hidden agendas which could impede progress (probing for content and meaning) so she can take action for resolution.

In addition to managing opposition to the restructuring issue itself, Gayle found herself problem-solving ancillary issues which surfaced during the dialogue. This required a great deal of patience and attention, because staff felt these issues were just as important to “school reform” as restructuring.

The Math department expressed concerns about the inadequate photocopy capabilities on campus, the lack of communication regarding students participating in field trips, and the need to monitor student smoking.
on campus more closely. The English department expressed concerns about inclusion and their inability to address a wide spectrum of instructional needs during a two-hour block of time.

Gayle chose to address, rather than ignore, these ancillary issues (taking action) in order to prevent them from interfering with the primary reform issue. She demonstrated how some of the concerns would be alleviated through the reform. For example, through block scheduling, there would be increased student supervision and fewer class changes. Students would, therefore, have fewer opportunities to smoke and skip class. Skipping class would take on a new dimension because classes would meet only two or three times a week. Students would be in class for longer periods of time thus providing time for extended instructional activities which would, in turn, alleviate inclusion concerns.

Concerns, such as making more copy machines available, Gayle believed were best resolved outside of the restructuring dialogue. She made note of those issues and planned to refer them to other forums.

Gayle garners respect and admiration from people because she handles problems in a direct and caring manner. She does not shy away from troubled situations, but faces them directly using her power to bring about mutual resolution. (Appendix H, C2 Doc 1, Lines 940-947)

G: When things become questioned or troubled, then they definitely belong to me.

At that point, I am the one in power at that point to have to resolve the issues and to deal with it.

Gayle works creatively and inventively in troubleshooting. She is constantly on guard, "taking a reading", as she phrases it (monitoring and assessing). From such a position, she gathers information and analyzes it. She probes for content and meaning through questions and doesn’t mind challenging people who appear uncaring (care) or unjust (equity). Throughout resolution of issues like these, Gayle remains cordial and understanding; because, in her guardian manner, she is focused on the school’s welfare. (Appendix C, Case 2, page 51)

**Working for the Greater Good**

Gayle is well positioned in a high school organization, and a culture, which needs her safeguarding and consensus building skills. The Ethan Allen High School campus is the only school in this study with a full-time security force that regulates access to the campus as well as responds continuously to disturbances within the school. It is the only school that has a fence around it with a gated entrance regulated by the security force.

The walls around the school are a metaphor for Gayle’s skill in safeguarding others. She is resolute in her efforts to maintain a stable and harmonious organizational environment (administrative vision) at Ethan Allen. Her first concern is the people’s well-being,
which supports her primary interest of providing educational services to students (mission). (Appendix H, C2 Doc 1, Lines 766-773)

G: But instruction is our primary focus assuming everything is safe. Anything that impacts on safety, you check it out, no matter how anonymous the tip is.

Through steadfast shepherding, Gayle seeks to guide and guard the people, programs, and processes at Ethan Allen. Her desire for a secure and amicable school environment (vision) attunes her to conflicts and problems before they become unmanageable. This results in the vigilant alertness which characterizes her shepherding strategy.

Through engaging the school community in a consensus-based decisional process, Gayle demonstrates the ability to move beyond traditional, subordinate/dominant relationship patterns, characteristic of bureaucratic organizational structures. As she places herself into lateral relationships with the other members of the school community (teambuilding), Gayle demonstrates the courage necessary to support open dialogue which builds trust and ensures equity. (Appendix H, C2 Doc 1, Lines 1210-1212)

G: And, it is resolving things, again building trust and being fair, and being open.

Open dialogue creates a framework that supports Gayle in effectively building relationships with her school community (relational transactions). Decisions are made with support from those involved and with agreement from those affected (decisional transactions). Because of this, Gayle earns respect from her staff, colleagues, and the community (district support). (Appendix D, page 6)

Dialogue often occurs around the conference table (administrative symbol) or another small coffee table in Gayle’s office (assembling). It is a powerful metaphor for engagement as its shape connotes a sense of equality. Within this venue of trust and equality, the individual is honored and goodwill is fostered. (Appendix C, Case 2, page 15)

At the table, Gayle guides the school community to focus on the student, towards whom she feels a maternal commitment. In the following conversation excerpt between Gayle and a disgruntled parent whose son was suspended, Gayle’s maternalism is evident. (Appendix D, Page 5)

G: Your son is the one I am most concerned about. We spent a lot of time discussing the situation. We got the coach and AD together and thought this through.

The boy’s mother expressed concern about how hard this was for her son to go through. However, she appreciated Gayle’s concern as she sustained him through the disciplinary action. In fact, her son had told his mother about it, and Gayle responded in a maternal manner.
G: That makes me happy he said that, because I felt I was his mother in your place.

Gayle is particularly effective at healing troubled situations. Perhaps it is because she is able to identify with those who feel insecure and feel a need to look to someone else for help (administrative identification). (Appendix D, page 8)

In recognition of this need, Gayle considers her own vision for Ethan Allen: a stable, safe, and harmonious place where teachers are empowered participants in the delivery of educational services to satisfied parents and students.

In service to this vision, Gayle empowers others to develop self-reliance (administrative motivation) in order to develop faith in their own judgment (administrative motivation outcome). (Appendix D, page 8)

G: Once you get clump of power, you decide whether or not to change rooms, or teachers. You are in charge like the “I” team works [manages their students].

The “clump of power”, of course, is the empowerment process in action.

Through demonstrations of trust and loyalty (administrative fit characteristic), Gayle has become a trusted member of her school community (administrative fit). With an egalitarian spirit and sense of community welfare, she creates a collegial atmosphere in which people view each other as partners in the educational process. (Appendix D, page 8)

Expanding upon her own vigilance, Gayle possesses the ability to create genuine security for others. Gifted with an almost natural ability to anticipate trouble, Gayle uses her determination to guide and protect those over whom she is charged. The world can be full of danger and trouble; but through steadfast shepherding, Gayle imparts confidence and courage to others to work cooperatively focused on the needs of the students. Gayle calls it “serving the clientele”, a phrase she uses frequently to orient people’s work efforts.

G: It is a time to examine and reexamine. We must look at things another way. We can look at different ways to work with our population. Students are our customers, and we are the service agent. I want to hear what you want to do.
Gayle is a true steward at heart, courageous, trustworthy, and determined to aptly “serve the clientele”. Through steadfast shepherding, she extends herself in service. She imparts confidence and courage to others through her calm and reassuring presence, as she empowers them to join her in working together for the greater good.
I. Introduction

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THE CONSTRUCTIVE PRINCIPAL

Case Report

Introduction

The term constructive is derived from the word construct, which means to build or form by putting parts together. The word, constructive, extends the meaning to include the promotion of, further development, or advancement of something. Broadening the definition and applying it to school administration, the term, constructive, suggests improvement.

A constructive principal is a person who identifies with the need to strengthen and direct people. In applying a constructive spirit to an administrative style, the result is a commitment to building up people and improving their working conditions. (Appendix H, C3 Doc1A, Lines 1795-1798)

C: I try to do a lot of things to make life better for them, you know.

And, I feel like in the five short years that I have been here, I have made some improvements.

Much as a foreman manages a construction project, the constructive principal manages a school: there is direction, control, and care in building up things and developing people. Construction, within the context of the principalship, involves providing staff development initiatives, capital improvements, remediation programs, equipment and materials, as well as problem solving.

Principal: Connie Conrad

Connie Conrad personifies the constructive style. Now in her sixth year of the principalship at Greenland, Connie has been a practicing school administrator for approximately 23 years. Connie has worked at Greenland since the school opened. She has been a teacher, counselor, coordinator, assistant principal, and now principal. She explains her promotions as “moving down the hall” and each time acquiring a new room that was located just a little closer to the principal’s office.

Connie brings to her role a forceful and expansive presence. She can fill a room with her enormous energy and her “can do” attitude. People naturally seem to look to her for guidance, as she exhibits traditional leadership characteristics and behaviors like self-confidence, assertiveness, authority, and decisiveness.

A crest-like picture of a Viking, the school mascot, which hangs in her office, symbolizes Connie’s powerful presence. Greenland is the home of the Vikings, named for the group of Scandinavian warriors who sought power, wealth, and adventure. The original Vikings were known as the world’s best shipbuilders and used their vessels to raid the coasts of
Europe and the British Isles. These Norsemen conquered and subjugated people to acquire land and goods in order to advance their way of life.

Coincidentally, Connie’s physical appearance is not unlike the people of Scandinavian descent. She has the same fair skin, blonde hair, and strong build that characterized the seafaring warriors of the 9th, 10th, and 11th centuries.

Connie uses her personal and positional presence to promote standards and ideals in order to develop educational programs. (Appendix H, C3 Doc1A, Lines 324-329)

C: I just feel that it is important that we improve instruction by maintaining qualified teachers, maintain the right number of materials, the right number of support staff, and all of that kind of thing.

Connie extends her commitment to education by serving on the regional accreditation board. As a member of this board, she evaluates schools and advises principals on meeting educational standards. Connie is popular with her principal colleagues whom she stays in contact with regularly through professional activities.

Connie’s administrative style is characterized as constructive because she works tirelessly to build a school culture where possibilities can emerge and take form. Her focus is on providing for the staff in order to serve the educational needs of the children (administrative beneficiary) by continually enhancing people and programs (mission). (Appendix H, C3 Doc1A, Lines 771-774)

C: I feel we are just there for the kid first and the teacher second. We try to do the best we can for all of them involved.

Administrative Context

The administrative context (administrative setting and administrative characteristics) represents the circumstances and conditions that influence the principal’s administration of the school. (Appendix D, Pages 6, 7 and 8; Appendix F, C3 Paradigm)

The constructive principal, while maintaining an intense focus on the local school organization, seeks opportunities for service outside of the school. Connie participates in community and civic groups, and she serves on regional committees and boards within the state. She enjoys camaraderie with her colleagues especially during state and national conferences. She enjoys this part of her job because it builds collegiality with other principals while at the same time allowing her to participate in educational decision-making on a larger scale.
Administrative Setting

Greenland High School is a suburban school, statuesquely situated on a large tract of rolling grassland set against the backdrop of a mountain skyline. The contrast between the grassland and the deep blue sky creates an intense setting where Vikings rule.

Greenland High School is 27 years old; it houses grades 10 through 12. It serves a homogeneous, primarily white, middle class student population numbering approximately 900. There are approximately 80 faculty and staff supporting the local school operation (school characteristics).

Directly behind the high school is the junior high school, which serves grades 7 through 9. It is the primary feeder to the high school, thus creating a strong sense of physical community. The two schools not only share the same student population but also share various resources, services, and facilities. Proximity breeds familiarity, loyalty, and allegiance as students matriculate the junior high and attend the nearby senior high across a span of six years.

The county, within which Greenland is located, has approximately 80,000 residents. Four high schools provide educational services to approximately 13,300 students. Two of the four high schools have female principals (district characteristics).

School governance at Greenland is based in tradition. The principal is the leader of the school assisted by two assistant principals, one who oversees instruction and the other who oversees operations. The athletic director is perhaps the most prominent member of Connie’s inner circle of advisors; they work closely together. Connie takes a great deal of pride in Greenland’s athletic program and, therefore, assumes an active role in co-managing the program with the athletic director.

Having served in essential positions at the school throughout her 26-year history, Connie has acquired an unmatched knowledge of school services. It is not surprising, therefore, that she personally oversees all aspects of instruction and operations. She participates in teacher evaluation, creation of the master schedule, allocation of resources, and management of student discipline.

Greenland High is growing, and changes are required to accommodate the growth. Next year, the ninth grade will be moved from the junior high to Greenland High. This will present program and staffing challenges for Connie, as she must accommodate several hundred additional students. In addition, a new wing to the school is currently under construction. It will house new laboratories and classrooms. Plans for a new field house complex are on the architectural drawing board. If approved, it will provide the school with state-of-the-art athletic facilities including a new gymnasium. The prospect for change excites Connie as she endeavors to make Greenland a more desirable place in which to educate students.
Administrative Characteristics

A hardworking, self-reliant individual, Connie exudes the aura of a natural leader. Energetic and expansive, Connie radiates a take charge attitude subscripted with a "Don't mess with me" demeanor (emanating eminence). (Appendix C, Case 3, pages 6-15)

Highly committed to her work, Connie engages it directly. Enormously self-confident, she is resolute and decisive as she uses her strength to make decisions and solve problems. Relying on her strong orientation to justice and fair play, she is not afraid to take a stand or shoulder responsibility.

Connie tempers her superabundant drive for power and control with wisdom, wit, and charm. She can be both tough and tender in managing a broad spectrum of daily school operations. In one minute, she can be very stern with a student who breaks the rules and in the next charming the curriculum supervisor, Dr. Jenkins, into granting Greenland a favor. Because of the value Connie places on friendship and social connection, she enjoys visits from central office personnel and spends a lot of time. Dr. Jenkins is Connie’s predecessor and friend; they enjoy talking about the sports teams whenever he visits.

Connie is as active a member in the local community as she is in her school. She says her “strong suits” are speaking up and enjoying a social orientation to life. She administers to children through her work in the school and to families and friends through her work in the church and civic organizations. In blending many roles that require knowledge, responsibility, and authority, Connie emerges as a matriarch.

Longevity, commitment, competition, friendship, and pride are strong core values of Connie’s and, likewise, of Greenland. It was not surprising, then, that upon her appointment to the principalship at Greenland, Connie received 22 bunches of flowers, all delivered on the day her appointment was announced. She had finally arrived, in a sense, at the doorstep of her destiny: the principalship. (Appendix D, Pages 4, 6; Appendix C, Case 3 Narrative)

Administrative Strategy: Preeminent Proffering

Connie is a very generous principal who sees to people’s needs. As a fixture in the culture, Connie’s presence both signifies and promotes stability and tradition (administrative context). The athletic director states it eloquently.

AD: Basically, what goes on here is she runs the ship. She, basically, says what goes on and sees to what you need.

During her principalship, Connie has maintained many of the same programs and procedures as they existed under Dr. Jenkins, her
predecessor, colleague, and friend. (Appendix H, C3 Doc 1, Lines 2289-2302)

C: But, now my work [with] Dr. Jenkins, over those years of the kinds of things that we went through together and the kinds of ways that he handled things are the same.

A lot of the things we do are exactly like he did them, although a lot of them have been modified.

For example, when he left, he left me thousands of dollars that he had hoarded in accounts. And, I was able to buy many things for the faculty.

Connie was delighted to inherit a rich school coffer that initiated an improvement focus, which she has maintained at Greenland since her appointment. She believes that a principal must always be thinking about how to upgrade things (building the program). (Appendix C, Case 3; Appendix H, C3 Doc1A, Lines 422-433)

C: There has to be a master plan of improving everything here, you know . . . . You have to get a big broad picture, and you have to always focus on that improvement one way or another.

Preeminent proffering describes Connie’s strategy for cultivating people’s strengths and building school programs. During her principalship, Connie has facilitated improvements in staff performance (promoting performance), policies and procedures (improving operations), and the school facility (plentiful provisioning), including equipment, materials, and landscaping. (Appendix C, Case 3)

As a strong supporter of human resource development, Connie frequently announces opportunities to the staff and provides aid in funding those opportunities (fostering self-improvement). She also encourages students to avail themselves of opportunities to take an extra class before school during the “zero” period or to participate in the after-school remediation program.

In her “take charge” way, Connie is always looking for ways to improve procedures. Creating the master schedule presents opportunities for improvement every year as programs change over time. Connie is holding meetings now preparing to accept ninth graders into the school next year. Many operations will need modification to accommodate their program needs.

Connie most enjoys providing materials and resources to staff in order to assist them in executing their job more effectively (plentiful provisioning). She works directly with the athletic director in
identifying needs and allocating monies for equipment, uniforms, and facility improvements.

Connie recently renovated a room for use as the faculty smoking lounge. The teachers were extremely appreciative, as the alternative at most schools is the boiler room. Speaking fondly of her, one teacher said, “Connie put the wall in, the carpeting in, brought furniture up here, chairs and curtains. We really do appreciate it.” As Connie heard this compliment, she responded teasing them, “Yep, we did it so they could keep on smoking.”

Connie reports that she continues “working on bad situations all of the time” never giving up or giving in. She has recently differentiated supervision assignments to accommodate both staff and student needs (differentiating assignments). She changed outdoor supervision from shared staff duty assignments to person-specific duty assignments. Not only did this serve the school better, but it also has been popular with the staff. Now she is working on indoor supervision focusing specifically on student bathrooms, which are being vandalized.

Preeminent proffering is fundamentally concerned with planning and organizing to improve work efficiency and effectiveness. Connie enjoys planning, which is evident in a phrase she uses: “We need a plan, we need a procedure, we need a modus operandi!” There are five strategies associated with this process: consulting, clarifying, empowering, informing, and monitoring. (Appendix F, C3 Paradigm)

Connie uses consulting to invite members of the school community into the decisional process. By bringing a group of people together, Connie is able to identify and guide analysis of issues.

C: But, I like to get together and talk a little bit about, are we doing this the right way. Or, could we improve this situation.

Connie uses members’ ideas and suggestions to make “group” decisions about organizational matters.

C: Well, I think, uhm, as far as school operations are concerned, group decision-making is by far and above, the best. You know that you get input from outside. You get a lot of different views; and then, a group of you make a decision that seems to meet most of the needs of the most people. And, go with that.

After she solicits input from those involved and affected by a decision, she either sanctions a decision, which emerges from the group process or makes the decision herself based on everyone’s welfare.
C: I feel like I see the total picture, and I try to make it in everybody’s best interests.

Sometimes Connie convenes a group to narrow down choices for the faculty, particularly when a decision involves the entire school. The small group will identify several viable choices, which they place on a ballot for approval by the faculty.

C: If you have something that has several choices, we narrow down to four or five choices and we vote democratically and the majority wins.

The faculty uses a democratic voting process to make the decision. Sometimes a mere showing of hands indicates the choice; at other times, a secret ballot is used. The type of decision usually dictates the manner of vote.

The decision concerning the date and time for upcoming parent/teacher conferences was made using the voting process. A small group prepared alternatives based on parameters issued by the district office. The faculty voted by secret ballot.

The decision regarding which programs to place in the new wing of the school was made by convening a group of parents, community members, and staff to work as a team.

C: When we originally started on this, we got a tremendous group of parents together who were from the different areas that our feeder schools are from. We walked through the building. I pointed out the needs.

Then, we went back and sat down. We made a list of the things that we needed to improve on. Then those were the things that ended up being basically in that building area [new wing].

By educating them about the program needs of the school (informing), Connie was able to guide the group’s analysis and discussion. For example, Connie felt the guidance offices were in deplorable condition. She explained this to them, demonstrating a lot of credibility and insight for this program’s needs based on her experience as guidance coordinator for many years.

C: So, one of my primary goals was to get that career center and that guidance office up to snuff, side by side, hooked together. So, that is a major corner in that addition [new wing].
Connie found the addition of the new wing to be energizing and rewarding. Guided by a vision of a well-equipped school focused on productivity, Connie wanted this wing to have, as she puts it, “everything teachers could dream about”.

As Connie manages improvement projects like this wing, it is evident that she wants the best quality she can obtain for her money (frugal financing). With a very businesslike attitude, Connie “wheels and deals” to get what she wants. She argued for the best of everything in the new wing, which she referred to as, “the real thing”.

She felt that in the past, sacrifices and accommodations shortchanged the school. Now it was time to get, as she put it, “the right stuff” by stretching the budget as far as possible (prioritized purchasing).

C: Well, in this new one [wing], we will have everything: we will have the right kind of wire, we will have the right kind of hookups, we will have the right kind of desks and everything.

In order to identify the best decisions, Connie invests a lot of time and energy (energetic engaging) in actively monitoring processes, procedures, and programs. Through gathering information, evaluating effectiveness, and analyzing trends, Connie either makes recommendations for group decisions or acts single-handedly.

Because of growing concerns during the past two years with the in-school disciplinary program (IDP), Connie wanted to make some changes in its location and its procedures. Working with the team, Connie convinced them to relocate the IDP room into the main office suite. It should replace the marketing office, which could move to the new wing (resourceful optimizing). By doing this, administrative staff would be readily available for support (assisting) to the teachers supervising the recalcitrant students (managing conflict).

C: I need, instead of those children being in that room up there at the end of the hall, I need them to be down here where we can get there in fifteen seconds... a room with a teacher... who could raise her voice and get one of us.

Although the new wing was bringing much needed space and newer equipment and facilities to the school, its arrival was not without problems and concerns. It presented managerial challenges daily as construction progress incrementally affected normal school operations.

As construction trailers and construction materials encroached upon the grounds, Connie monitored for their effects. One immediate concern was the impact on parking. Students’ parking spaces were disappearing forcing them to look for other places to park.

C: I just had to pull kids, two kids, out of the bus driver’s parking
lot. And Monday, it is going to be a zoo!

In an effort to mitigate against escalating problems and concerns, Connie put the staff on notice (informing) about upcoming changes to parking procedures.

C: So, we will be changing the parking situation out here pretty quickly in this parking lot. So, be prepared for that.

Connie makes a concerted effort to keep people informed about school-wide activities and events. She often uses the PA system to make announcements, particularly if students are affected. By keeping people informed, Connie feels operations will run smoother.

In managing the parking situation, Connie handled it in a straightforward manner. Initially, she gathered and evaluated information. She directed her parking lot attendants to survey all of the lots for space and numbers of students currently parking in them. In addition to analyzing current parking statistics, Connie had to factor in at least 40 additional spaces for students who would soon be receiving driving permits soon.

In order to determine a suitable direction, Connie consulted with a number of people about the parking situation. Not only did she discuss it with her school staff, but she also discussed it with the former principal, Dr. John Jenkins, as well as with a former assistant principal. She wanted ideas and suggestions that would alleviate displacement concerns Greenland was now facing.

Trying to be fair and equitable, Connie struggled with preserving lot designations. Seniors, for example, had parking privileges that Connie wanted to safeguard.

C: I have got to do something. We are not fully utilizing the senior parking lot. I have got to relocate some people down there.

Considering everyone’s welfare (caring), Connie determined a course and committed herself to action. She communicated that direction to the students and staff during the morning announcements in an informative and respectful manner.

C: As you are well aware, the construction project which took the old senior parking lot and then took another parking lot, for the trailers which are coming in here for the contractors, has created some problems in parking.

The senior parking lot down front is not filled during the day. I would like to have some juniors to park down
there in the lower end, down
towards the new ball field . . .
particularly I am interested in
juniors who need to go to work
right after school and who need to
get out quickly.

Through the process of clarifying, Connie explained further how the
changes affected everyone and where they should park.

Connie admits to running a tight ship. When she discusses problems with
the faculty and they make decisions, Connie expects that everyone will
follow through, whether it is parking, preparing grade reports on time,
or procedures for students to use the restrooms. (Appendix H, C3 Doc1A,
Lines 1500-1504)

C: I feel like I run a tight ship. And,
I am saying once we decide, for example,
that no one goes to the bathroom during
first period, then I expect it not to
happen, you know.

Once major decisions are made, Connie empowers others to carry them
out; She empowered the parking lot attendants who were responsible for
supervising the parking lot. She also empowered her assistant
principals to manage serious infractions resulting from noncompliance.

The two assistant principals at Greenland have substantial
responsibility and discretion in carrying out their assignments. One
assistant oversees instruction while the other oversees facilities;
both manage discipline. They often assist Connie, however, on school-
wide matters such as the construction of the new wing.

Through empowering, Connie stimulates people’s inner strengths and
personal direction. Once general expectations are agreed upon, Connie
prefers to stand behind people giving them strength to carry out their
own work activities.

Connie was an active participant in the construction meetings
(teambuilding) joking and teasing while the foremen, on the other hand,
sustained rather serious mindsets. During a meeting one morning, the
general contractor identified four sizeable trees for removal because
they were impeding access to the wing. He scheduled them for removal
the following day. A stewardship ethic emerged as Connie became
alarmed. The trees were a gift to the school from a graduating class
several years ago. They were part of Greenland’s heritage and must be
preserved. (Appendix H, C3 DOC5B.OUT.DOC, Lines 1-503)

Connie mounted a personal campaign to save the trees. Connie was not
about to sacrifice them without a fight. Speaking to the construction
workers, Connie explained the significance of the trees (informing).
(Appendix H, C3 Doc 5B, Lines 10-13)

C: Some of those trees are important
because they are from a graduating
class. It is important to save
them, if we can.
The foremen were sympathetic, but would not agree to help. To them, they were just a routine problem and not worth the trouble or the cost to save. Connie, however, was not deterred by their disinterest.

Despite the time constraints, district authorization, funds, personnel, or any real expertise in moving trees, Connie began looking for ways to solve this crisis. She was determined to find a way to preserve the trees because of their meaning and importance to the school (identifying with the school).

In her “wheel and deal” manner, which often emerges when Connie sets her sights on an improvement goal, Connie educated herself about moving trees and appealed to a number of people for help. Encountering obstacles every step of the way, Connie despairingly confided in two school district shop men who had come to the school the next morning to do some routine exterior maintenance.

In an attempt to invite their compassion for her dilemma, Connie tried to enlist their sympathy and support. She relayed her story and referred to the trees personally as, “my trees”. (Appendix H, C3 Doc 5B, Lines 273-276)

C: I think I am going to have to cut my trees. I called everybody who even thinks about moving trees, and they are like three months backlogged.

As Connie engaged the men in her problem, the idea of borrowing the construction contractor’s backhoe to dig the trees out emerged as an option. It was possible to move the trees and replant them in the front of the school using that backhoe; Connie just needed someone to operate the backhoe. Would these maintenance men be willing to help Greenland?

In a rather clever and cunning manner, Connie told the maintenance men a story about a man who owns a tree service in an adjoining district. Although she has tried several times to reach him, she had been unable to make contact. She felt sure he could handle this job; but he would probably have charged her, despite the fact that he could well afford to do it, as Connie put it, “for free”. Doing it “for free” would be a charitable thing to do.

By involving the maintenance men in this story, Connie subtly appealed to their good will (persuading). Connie was “on the stump” looking for help with her trees. Coincidentally, the stumps of the trees were part of the concern in dealing with them. The stumps could not be left in the ground even if the tree trunks were cut; the stumps had to be removed no matter what was done with the trees.

In an effort to further engage these men, Connie began a hypothetical discussion about how these trees could be moved if the priority was to save them. The discussion included the type of trees, the condition and preservation of the root balls, the procedures for moving, and the meaning the trees had to the school.
Connie successfully secured both sympathy and cooperation for her situation and recruited the two maintenance men as allies (teambuilding). Together they approached the contractor’s backhoe operator. He controlled the essential resource needed for this project.

After some discussion about the proposal, Connie challenged the three men to participate in her plan. Searching out their vulnerabilities, Connie appealed to the three workers’ sense of manhood. In the quote below, she uses the term boys, a diminutive for men, thus subtly challenging the hero aspect of these workers. (Appendix H, C3 Doc 5B, Lines 380-381)

C: All right, boys, think about this:
Can they be saved?

Connie was patient and persuasive (motivating) as she negotiated the objections they raised in response to her challenge. She cleverly used her status as matriarch of Greenland to secure the men’s assistance to Mother Nature and the community’s alma mater (‘alma mater’ means ‘mother’).

The persuasive hook involving identification with “mother” appeared to be working; so, Connie moved to closure by reiterating the challenge, “It would be worth a try, okay?” The workers hesitated and looked at one another. One worker finally replied, “Cost you a steak dinner”. Delighted, Connie exclaimed, “You got it baby! You pick the restaurant!” (Note the reference to ‘baby’ which brings closure to Connie’s maternal appeal.)

Pressing forward with her agenda before momentum for the campaign could die, Connie asked them, “Do you want to dig the holes out front now?” Hesitantly, the men responded by citing concern about doing work outside their current work order. In addition, they were concerned that their respective bosses knew nothing about this new assignment, which they had taken upon themselves to do gratis.

Connie attempted to clarify the backhoe operator’s concern with his boss: “Are we going to tell him or are we just going to do it?” Hesitantly, he replied, “I can do it . . .” Connie requested further clarification: “Want me to call him or do you not want me to call him?” The men decided that they wanted Connie to handle this. They knew she was assertive enough to shoulder responsibility and strong enough to protect them.

True to her constructive style, Connie demonstrated through this campaign, not only her strength and authority, but also the loyalty and trust in people she engenders when she uses her talents and abilities in service to something outside of herself. In this instance, it was service to the natural order of things, Greenland’s heritage, and Mother Nature.

Launching a Legacy

Connie is well positioned in a high school organization which appreciates her respect for culture and tradition (administrative fit). The Greenland High School community is a stable community where generations of families have attended the school. The school prides
itself in offering a solid academic program and a strong sports program to the community. (Appendix D, page 8)

Greenland High School is the only school in this study that maintains gender-segregated teachers’ lounges. In addition, it is the only school that has a principal who has spent her entire working career in one school; and, therefore, has maintained solid social connections with many of the staff and their families.

Connie’s knowledge about Greenland is unmatched. Her longevity in the culture has equipped her with a vast amount of social knowledge. She knows generations of families that have either attended or worked at Greenland. Her assistant principal, Andrew (A), confirms her cultural expertise.

A: There is not another person in the world who knows this community like Connie.

Connie is aptly equipped for leadership at Greenland, a school whose attitudes, values, and beliefs are almost identical to her own. So identified with the culture is Connie that people claim that her “blood runs green”, the school color.

A matriarch to the school community, Connie seeks to make life better for everyone in order to support children, towards whom she feels a maternal responsibility. (Appendix H, C3 Doc1A, Lines 231-237)

C: That comes back to my natural sensitivity to children. You know I want children to have everything they are entitled to have.

Wise, willful, and, at times, wolfish, Connie is trusted by her community to take care of Greenland High School. Using her personal strength and resolve along with a strong sense of justice, fairness, and equity, Connie facilitates order in a traditional and stable culture. (Appendix D, page 4)

Respect and prominence as a cultural icon coupled with a strong desire for the community’s well being, create a powerful relational framework within which Connie maintains connections (relational transactions) and makes decisions (decisional transactions). As a result, the staff, students, and the community admire her (district support). (Appendix D, page 7)

Preeminent proffering is the administrative strategy Connie uses to enlist cooperation and support from the people in her school community. This term is descriptive because it demonstrates how Connie provides not only resources and materials but also support for the people. In a preeminent manner, she confers privilege and property in a forthright and efficacious manner in order to enable the school community to achieve common goals (mission).

Through preeminent proffering, Connie sanctions ideas; implements new policies, practices, and procedures; supports people; builds programs;
and solves problems. One staff member (S) puts is simply: Connie is solution-oriented.

S: This lady is solution-oriented. This is what has made her an outstanding principal and caused the morale of the faculty to stay up. She is constantly searching for solutions.

Connie extends herself in service to the people she calls “friends”. “I will take care of you” is a credo that represents the spirit with which Connie works. It means I am strong and will support you. (Appendix D, page 5)

Connie’s service ethic enables her to identify with others’ need for assistance (administrative identification). Through a confluence of knowledge about the people, who are her friends as well as her staff, and compassion for their needs, Connie motivates them. (Appendix H, C3 Doc1A, Lines 2358-2364)

C: I believe everybody should be stimulated to their fullest. I think everybody’s strengths should be utilized.

Connie taps people’s strengths; and by providing a clear sense of direction, she prompts them to use those strengths to become self-sufficient (administrative motivation) so they are able to supply their own needs (administrative motivation outcome). Through her caring and preeminent manner, she engages people in her ideals. She inspires them to use their strength working together for something larger than themselves, Greenland, their alma mater. This fosters goodwill and allegiance to the first woman principal of Greenland. (Appendix D, page 8)

Currently, Connie is harnessing her fortitude to promote the construction of a new sports complex. This complex would replace the current field house which is too small to accommodate the growth in school population and interest in sports the school is experiencing. Blueprints for this complex lay in the corner of Connie’s office.

Blueprints are a significant symbol representing Connie's interest in and commitment to improving her community. As detailed outlines and plans of action, blueprints for the new wing and blueprints of the sports complex represent the “dream” of a better future. (Appendix D, page 4)

In order to bring the sports complex dream to fruition, Connie is actively working with the architect in planning the new complex. She is also lobbying district personnel (networking, informing). As Connie explains to (B), the new complex has not been officially approved. The people, however, are working together (coalescing) to secure the requisite number of votes.

C: Well, we went and we had some parents there. They got off from
work and [etc]. And, you know, I made arrangements to take the day off and come here. I thought it was important and we had a nice contingency.

I think they are to come back in January to give them, the school board, a concept and pricing.

I have no doubt in my mind that immediately, as soon as they can work it out, you will get a bid. And I think the key to it now is what size of gym and how much money it will cost to do it.

I know they are going to fork out a million and a half. As to whether they are going to go three or five, that is something we just have to wait and see.

So, election morning, I was at breakfast for the business partners that all of the schools have. Dan Horne and all the supervisors were there. Afterwards, Bart and Al were in a conversation and I went over and teased them and said something to them that they were already business partners to kids, or something like that. Bart said, we are going to get you a gym. And, Al says, you sure are.

And, so there is the swing vote right there. There is number three.

So, I know we are going to get something, I just hope it is everything we want. I think they are all kind of feeling that there is a place for it.

So, what if, Hillside wants one by the year 2005. This is our money; they can get their own money. And what if in the year 2015 Ken [principal of River High] wants one too. Why not, if that’s what the community needs and wants, why not!

I think it is just real good. I think if we just hang in there and stay with them, then I think a
decision will be made in January. Don’t you?

B: Yeah, I do.

C: I hope so.

B: Four votes, that will do it.

C: I think he will help too. Knowing down the road that I told them if they go for it, I might not retire. I will delay my retirement for three years, they just laughed. But that is okay, it is worth it.

Through her strength, courage, and conviction, Connie uses her unique constructive style to work toward a future that is better than the past and the present. She seeks to inspire the support of others to follow her in realizing dreams they hold in common. The new sports complex represents the current dream and coincidentally is a structural representation of Connie’s professional and personal values. (Appendix H, C3 Doc1A, Lines 2256-2260)

C: I do not want to be away from kids. I want to be where there is a ball, and there is competition, and there is communication, and there is friendship.

When she does retire, Connie may well be remembered as someone who has made a positive impact on Greenland High School. The construction of this sports complex may be a tribute to the commitment she feels for her beloved Greenland; it will be her legacy.